

An Essay  
on the  
Pathology of the Sympathies

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The lymphatic vessels, (or absorbents as they are sometimes styled) receive their name from a greek word signifying water, from the watery or limpid fluid which they convey.

They are very minute and delicate, remarkable for their uniformity of size, a knotted appearance, and their

frequent division into pairs

They have a structure according to Kolliker, similar to that of the veins, viz., an external, middle, and internal coat, or tunic, within which the circulation is performed by the aid of numerous valves, (which give to the vessels their peculiar knotted appearance,) similar to the circulation in the venous system

Connected with the circulatory system of the lymphatic vessels, are

numerous small oval or rounded bodies, of a pale red color, called lymphatic or conglobate glands, which are composed of a ramifications of minute lymphatic and capillary blood vessels held together, and enclosed by a comparatively dense mass of areolar tissue

Owing to their extreme minuteness (with the exception perhaps of the thoracic duct) the study of the Pathology of the lymphatic system is extremely difficult and unsatisfactory, especially

of the superficial vessels,  
with these few introductory  
remarks we will proceed  
directly to the consideration  
of the special Pathology  
of the lymphatic system,  
which will be considered  
under the several heads of,  
Inflammation, Gangrene,  
Hypertrophy, Dilatation,  
Tubercle, Carcinoma, Melanosis, &c.

### First Inflammation

Like other inflammation,  
inflammation of the lym-  
phatics is characterized  
by pain, redness, heat, and  
swelling along the course

of the inflamed vessel,  
The color of the coats of  
the vessel in the simple,  
and commencement of the  
more serious forms, is of  
a light reddish tint

Resolution is the most  
frequent and favorable  
form of termination: but  
sometimes the color changes  
to a violet or more com-  
monly to a deep red, or  
purple color: and as the  
inflammation advances, the  
proper nutrient vessels  
become engorged with blood,  
the surrounding areola  
tissue becomes involved,

serum is exuded, and we have the formation of an abscess

Pus is also sometimes found in a vessel as a foreign substance, by mere absorption from an abscess in the immediate vicinity

Acute inflammation in the glands is of very common occurrence. In these cases the gland enlarges, sometimes as large as a large orange, and very often terminates in suppuration; as for instance in the inguinal and axillary regions

## Second Gangrene Acute inflammation

also sometimes terminally in gangrene, when immense sloughs are formed, as in cases of syphilitic baboes, occurring in debauched and worn-out habits

## Third Hypertrophy

Hypertrophy of the lymphatic glands is sometimes the result of chronic inflammation; sometimes the primary cause is seated in their own tissue, and sometimes it may arise from an irritation

communicated to them from the surrounding tissues, viz., in the mesenteric glands from an irritation in the bowels, in the axillary glands, from an irritation in the breast, in the inguinal glands, from an irritation in the penis, &c.

In these conditions their color is various as white, grey, or of a yellowish or brownish tint, sometimes of a dense or gritty hardness, grating sensibly under the knife. Sometimes in this

condition they so obstruct the process of nutrition as to cause emaciation and death; and Dr. William Hunter mentions an instance in which the internal iliac glands were so enlarged, as to cause death by preventing the descent of the child's head during the process of parturition.

#### Fourth Dilatation

A remarkable dilatation of the lymphatic vessels is sometimes

observed, giving them a varicose or tortuous arrangement, and the resulting tumors when examined present a spongy appearance, the size of all the vessels being enlarged, not unlike the varicose arrangement of the venous system

### Fifth Intercele

Of all parts of the human system, few are, perhaps, more liable to the deposition of tuberculous matter, than the lymphatic glands

It is deposited in the gland substance in yellowish masses and liable to all the changes that tubercular deposition elsewhere undergoes, and in one instance in my dissections I observed that the glands of the axilla were converted completely into a calcareous substance tubercular matter having been deposited cretification ensued

Children are particularly prone to a glandular tubercular deposit

Dr Lombard found

that of one hundred post mortem examinations of tuberculous children, the several glands were affected as follows, viz.:—  
Bronchial, eighty seven,  
mesenteric, thirty one,  
cervical, seven, and in-  
guinal, three.

*Sixth Carcinoma coming*  
There is probably no part of the human economy so liable to the deposition of secondary cancerous deposit, as that of the lymphatic glands. The reason

of this is obvious. In cases of cancerous habit, the cancer blastema may be absorbed from the affected organ, transferred by the lymphatics to a gland in the vicinity, there becoming entangled in the minute ramifications of the vessels, thus as it were becoming the exciting cause of a fresh deposition of cancerous matter in the new location; and in this way I think we may account for some forms of cancerous

cachexia especially in the more advanced stages

### Seventh Melanosis

Melanosis is sometimes an affection with which the glandular system is often complicated, more especially those which are in close proximity to the respiratory apparatus

It is not probably a morbid process of itself, but more properly speaking, a proof of the depuratory powers

of the glands by which  
they assist in the  
purification of the blood

There are also other  
pathological conditions  
of the lymphatic system,  
but as they are of minor  
importance, and as time  
and space will not  
permit me to enlarge,  
I will close, hoping these  
few, brief notices, will  
suffice the object for  
which they were written